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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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EXAMINER

WILLIAMS, MARK A

| | |
|----------|--------------|
| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|

3676

DATE MAILED: 03/14/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/821,766

Applicant(s)

BAKER, BRUCE

Examiner

Mark A. Williams

Art Unit

3676

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE ____ MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12/20/04.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-9, 13, and 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dushku, US Patent 3,945,065. A handle for a tool having a work-performing component with a primary line of attack and a natural arc of motion, comprising a distal end 24 coupled directly to the work-performing component; and a gripping portion 14 extending away from the distal end, the shape of the gripping portion being such that a user's wrist, forearm, or both, are in a substantially neutral position with respect to the primary line of attack and throughout at least a portion of the natural arc of motion. The gripping portion is curvilinear, describing a partial semi-circle or oval (if taken arbitrarily) and a closed circle or oval. The gripping portion further includes a slight taper along its length. The circumference of the gripping portion describes a flattened ellipsis. The device can be considered a cultivator, weeder, hoe, or shovel.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 3, 5, 14, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dushku. Dushku discloses the claimed invention except for the claimed ranges dimensions. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the device in this way, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. Such modifications are not critical to the design and would have produced no unexpected results.

5. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dushku in view of Mitchell, US Patent 5,533,768. Mitchell teaches a telescopic feature as a means for helping to absorb impact during use of a digging tool. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made for one skilled in the art to have included in the design of Dushku such a modification, as generally

taught in Mitchell, for the purpose of providing means to help absorb impact during use of the tool, particularly if doing a digging or shoveling operation.

6. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dushku in view of Dumont, US Patent 4,786,095. Dumont teaches the general concept of a detachable handle in a similar application, for the purpose of interchangeability. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made for one skilled in the art to have included in the design of Dushku such a modification, as generally taught in Dumont, for the purpose of being able to use the handle interchangeability with other tools.

7. Claims 12 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dushku. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have included a polymeric covering, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416. See also *Ballas Liquidating Co. v. Allied industries of Kansas, Inc.* (DC Kans) 205 USPQ 331. Such a modification is not critical to the design and would have produced no unexpected results.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 12/20/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the applied prior art does not provide a gripping portion lying in a plane, which is generally transverse to the plane of the work performing component, or blade. It is the position of the examiner that such subject matter does not overcome the applied art. Such subject matter as has not been sufficiently claimed so as to overcome the applied art, since any part of the work performing component will lie within any infinite arrangement of planes, no ^{matter} ~~manner~~ the orientation.

SAB
3/1/05

Conclusion

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the

advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark A. Williams whose telephone number is (703) 305-3438. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Mark Williams

3/5/05



Suzanne Dino Barrett
Primary Examiner